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Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 08535 071329Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------044645 071333Z /40
O 071237Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4028
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 8535

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, UNSC, PINT, LE, IS, SY
SUBJECT: SITUATION IN LEBANON

REF: A) STATE 171120 NOTAL B) STATE 171142, C) USUN 2808
D) DAMASCUS 3866

1. BEGINNING AT 1900 HOURS JULY 6 WHEN I BRIEFED DAYAN
ON OUR INTENTION TO CALL FOR A UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING
AND OTHER STEPS WE HAD BEEN TAKING VIS-A-VIS THE SYRIANS
AND OTHER PARTIS , WE HAVE BEEN IN FREQUENT TOUCH WITH
BEGIN, DAYAN AND WEIZMAN OVER THE PAST EIGHTEEN HOURS.
I HAD A BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH BEGIN AFTER DINNER LAST
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NIGHT AT APPROXIMATELY 2230 TO BRING HIM UP TO DATE; DCM
GAVE DAYAN A FURTHER STATUS REPORT AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME.
THIS MORNING, JULY 7, DCM HAS BRIEFED WEIZMAN AND I HAVE
HAVE BRIEFED BOTH DAYAN AND BEGIN SEPARATELY ON OVERNIGHT
DEVELOPMENTS. IN ALL THESE CONVERSATIONS WE HAVE MADE
STRONG POINT OF ACTIONS US HAS BEEN TAKING TO ARRANGE
CEASEFIRE, AND FACT THAT CEASEFIRE SEEMS TO BE MORE OR

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LESS IN EFFECT AND HOLDING AS OF 1330 JULY 7.

2. WE HAVE EXPLAINED THAT OUR EFFORTS TO CONVOKE A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING HAVE BEEN PUT ASIDE FOR THE TIME BEING IN VIEW OF THE CEASEFIRE AND OTHER NEGOTIATIONS UNDER WAY IN BEIRUT TO ESTABLISH IT ON A MORE LASTING BASIS, BUT WE HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT WE WILL BE PREPARED TO RENEW OUR UNSC EFFORTS IF SITUATION AGAIN DETERIORATES.

3. WE HAVE CITED NOTEWORTHY POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS LISTED IN REF A TO ALL THREE ISRAELI LEADERS THIS MORNING. WE HAVE ALSO AGAIN URGED EACH OF THEM TO IMPRESS ON THEIR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS THE NEED TO EXERCISE GREATEST POSSIBLE RESTRAINT WHILE WE PURSUE OTHER MEASURES TO CALM THE SITUATION. IN THIS CONNECTION, I HAVE ALSO CONVEYED TO BOTH BEGIN AND DAYAN THE FACT THAT WE UNDERSTAND THE SYRIAN TROOPS NOW HAVE ORDERS TO SHOW RESTRAINT AND TO TOLERATE CHRISTIAN PROVOCATIONS WITHIN LIMITS, LIMITS WHICH OBVIOUSLY ARE NOT VERY GREAT. (REF D, PARA FOUR.) I HAVE STRESSED THIS FACT IN ORDER TO UNDERSCORE NEED FOR ISRAELIS TO URGE CHRISTIANS TO RECIPROCATE WITH REGARD TO PROVOCATIONS.

4. BOTH BEGIN AND DAYAN HAVE BEEN VERY APPRECIATIVE OF ALL EFFORTS WE HAVE BEEN MAKING AND SHOWED CONSIDERABLE RELIEF TODAY OVER THE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH OCCURRED OVER

LAST NIGHT. INCIDENTALLY, THEY WERE BOTH ESPECIALLY PLEASED TO HEAR THAT WE WERE ATTEMPTING TO CONVOKE THE SECURITY COUNCIL, ALTHOUGH THEY EXPRESSED NO RESERVATIONS WHEN I TOLD THEM WE HAD PUT THAT EFFORT ASIDE AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT. BEGIN PUT MAXIMUM EMPHASIS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING THE CEASEFIRE, AND I ASSURED HIM THAT WE HAD GIVEN EQUAL PROMINENCE TO THIS OBJECTIVE IN ALL OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SYRIANS AND OTHERS. THEY AGREED WITH OUR CONCLUSION THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO PERSUADE SARKIS TO RECONSIDER HIS DECISION TO RESIGN IN ORDER NOT TO SEE EVAPORATE WHAT LITTLE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE EXISTS AND OPEN THE WAY FOR TOTAL SYRIAN TAKEOVER.

5. IN DCM'S CONVERSATION WITH WEIZMAN, THIS MORNING, HE WRYLY NOTED THAT WE APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN "VERY BUSY" OVERNIGHT AND SAID THAT WE HAD THE GOI'S COMPLETE SUPPORT IN OUR EFFORTS TO CONTAIN THE SITUATION. WHEN DCM REITERATED TO WEIZMAN NEED FOR CONTINUED ISRAELI RESTRAINT, WEIZMAN RESPONDED THAT HE WAS "SCARED" ABOUT SYRIAN INTENTIONS. OBSERVING THAT THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF PREPARATIONS OF ADDITIONAL NEW SYRIAN TROOP MOVEMENTS

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(TEL AVIV 0592 JUL 78 IR 6849059278), HE SAID THAT
IF SYRIANS WERE IN PROCESS OF REINFORCING THEIR GARRISONS
IN AND AROUND BEIRUT, THAT WOULD BE ONE THING. BUT IF
SYRIAN UNITS IN SOUTH WERE STRENGTHENED "WE WILL HAVE A
NEW BALLGAME". WEIZMAN WAS ESPECIALLY INTERESTED AT
HEARING THAT SAUDIS HAVE BEEN PLAYING HELPFUL ROLE.
(WOULD APPRECIATE FOR OUR BACKGROUND ANY FURTHER INFOR-
MATION AVAILABLE ON SAUDI ACTIVITIES.)

6.HAVE PROMISED TO KEEP BEGIN, DAYAN AND WEIZMAN CLOSELY
INFORMED ABOUT FAST-BREAKING DEVELOPMENTS OVER WEEKEND,
WHICH BEGINS HERE THIS AFTERNOON. ISRAELIS ARE CLEARLY
HOPEFUL THAT CRISIS IS BEING CONTAINED, BUT THEIR
WORRIES HAVE HARDLY BEEN ALLEVIATED.
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TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, PINT, LE, IS, SY, UNSC, (DAYAN, MOSHE), (LEWIS, SAMUEL W)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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